concerned authorities have issued show cause notices to such recruiting agents. Government have tightened the emigration control for Iraq and neighbouring countries. With effect from 15 April, 2004, emigration clearance for Iraq has been suspended. With effect from May 7, 2004, emigration clearance has been suspended for Jordan, Kuwait and UAE in respect of ex-servicemen in order to prevent recruiting agents from using these countries for taking ex-servicemen to Iraq. Indian Missions in Iraq and its neighbouring countries have been instructed to extend all possible assistance and guidance to such persons intending to return to India.

Unemployment in Maharashtra and Punjab

970. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of educated, uneducated, skilled and unskilled, unemployed persons registered in employment exchanges in the country, particularly in the States of Maharashtra and Punjab as on date, State-wise;

(b) whether Government have, so far, identified industries and other areas to provide employment to such persons;

(c) if so, the details of the area identified and the number of persons likely to be provided employment in such areas; and

(d) the strategies Government have adopted so far, to tackle an alarmingly increase in the rate of unemployment in the country as a whole and particularly in Punjab and Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) Details of the educated (10th standard and above) and uneducated jobseekers, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, on the live register of employment exchanges in Maharashtra and Punjab as on December 2002 in given below:

Job seekers as on December 2002 (In thousands)

	Educated	Uneducated
Maharashtra	3350.2	996.7
Punjab	383.1	123.3
All India	29667.9	11503.3

Skill-wise information is not maintained.

(b) to (d) During the 10th Plan, creation of 5 crore employment opportunities have been targeted and special emphasis has been given to Agriculture, Irrigation, Agro-Forestry, Small and Medium Enterprises, Information Communication Technology, Tourism and other services. This will help the unemployed persons in Punjab and Maharashtra also.

Policy for unemployed persons

†971. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of educated and uneducated unemployed in the country;

(b) whether Government are considering to call a meeting of labour Ministers and Chief Ministers for formulating a new comprehensive policy about unemployed persons;

(c) whether Government are going to provide any special assistance to the States like Uttaranchal to deal with this problem where average number of educated unemployed persons is very large; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) Number of educated (10th standard & above) and uneducated jobseekers, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, on the live register of employment exchanges in the country as on December 2002 were 296.68 lakh and 115.03 lakh respectively.

(b) At present, there is no proposal in the Ministry of Labour and Employment to call a meeting of Labour Ministers and Chief Ministers for formulating a new comprehensive policy about unemployed persons.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal in the Ministry of Labour & Employment to provide any special assistance to any State to deal with problem of educated unemployed.

Child Labour Project of Maharashtra

972. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Maharashtra has been

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.